

Dear Sir/Madam:

I was pleased to see that the public could have a chance to comment on changes in FCC rules. In discussions at gatherings among artist-colleagues, and work colleagues lately, the FCC has been brought up many times. As I work in the fields of both education, and in arts, I (and my colleagues in each of the camps) have strong concerns that lead me to write this to you today.

In terms of education, we are already dealing with children who are faced with an onslaught of media input every day. The way that many of the teachers work against this is to teach children to look for both quality and diversity in the information to which they are exposed through various media channels. A variety of world views in a variety of formats can in fact be of great benefit to children's understanding. But if the FCC rules change, we fear that less of this quality, diverse programming will be offered, and instead, the tighter market will mean increased media control of air time so that big companies and their commercials, and mainstream shows will be most of what the children see. It also will seem wrong if we continue to teach lessons of capitalism (not monopolies, children, no the free market won't allow that) and democracy when clearly the access to information will be severely limited.

As an artist and social commentator myself, who uses public means to disseminate my information, I worry that as corporate control of media tightens, there will be very little place for the voices of artists and social commentators, and instead, very "made for the medium part of the masses" programming will prevail. Programming that comes from a variety of sources can teach people new ways of looking at things, stimulate social change, and enlighten and beautify life. I think that it is a responsibility of the FCC to ensure that media in America, a country that is seen world-wide as an example of democracy, continues to reflect and celebrate in its media the diversity of voices and views of the people in America.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sarah Considine  
Director of Development  
Los Angeles Leadership Academy